

VZCZCXRO9730  
PP RUEHROV  
DE RUEHMK #0006 0051209  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 051209Z JAN 09  
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8341  
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHBVAKS/COMUSNAVCENT PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000006

SIPDIS

BAGHDAD FOR AMBASSADOR ERELI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/05/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPAL](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: GAZA: PUBLIC GOVERNMENT CONDEMNATION, PRIVATE  
PRAGMATISM; ORDERLY DEMONSTRATIONS CONTINUE

REF: A. 08 MANAMA 839

[B](#). 08 MANAMA 845

[C](#). 08 MANAMA 677

Classified By: CDA Christopher Henzel for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#). (U) Summary: The GOB condemned Israel in strident terms for the Gaza conflict, but was more measured in private. Small demonstrations continue daily. End summary.

[2](#). (SBU) There were small, orderly gatherings each day January 3-5, not exceeding 300 marchers. Sunni and Shi'a generally attended separate demonstrations. An opportunity for larger gatherings will come during Ashura processions late January 6 and during the day January 7. (Emergency action committee meeting reported septel.)

[3](#). (SBU) Local newspapers continue to lead with the Gaza violence and often front photos of dead and injured Palestinians. Unspecified Arab governments, along with Israel and the U.S., come in for heavy editorial criticism. Papers also reported a call by unspecified MPs for Arab states to use oil as a weapon against Israel.

[4](#). (U) All media gave prominent coverage to the humanitarian supplies the GOB shipped to Gaza January 3, reportedly worth one million dollars. King Hamad appointed his son, Sheikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, to head a humanitarian relief committee and oversee this and future aid efforts.

[5](#). (U) On January 2, Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa briefed Sunni members of parliament on the GOB's response. (Note: Shi'a MPs did not attend the briefing due to an unrelated disagreement with the government over the arrest of fourteen Shi'a who the GOB alleges were part of a "terrorist plot" (ref B)). The FM outlined the GOB's efforts to provide direct humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza and called Israeli actions a "crime against humanity." MPs insisted that the FM abandon his proposal for a new regional bdy that would include Israel (ref C).

[6](#). (U) Th Cabinet on January 4 issued a statement describin Israeli actions in Gaza as "genocide" and condoning what it termed "cleansing" operations there.

[7](#). (C) The GOB is more pragmatic in private. enior MFA officials expressed to CDA worry that he situation could destabilize the region, and hped that U.S. and moderate Arab diplomatic efforts could produce an outcome that minimized sympathy for Hamas and damage to moderate Arab governments standing with their streets.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Visit Embassy Manama's Classified Website:  
<http://www.statesgov.gov/p/nea/manama/>  
\*\*\*\*\*

